

These colonies were tucked away in areas not much frequented by microlepidopterists and were probably of long standing; similar colonies were most likely present in other counties.

In recent years local councils often plant small-leaved limes as amenity trees on roadside verges and in Essex at any rate *B. thoracella* spread to them from its woodland haunts. Common lime (*T. x vulgaris*) often grows alongside and *B. thoracella* began to use it as an alternative foodplant and then fully adapted to it. This made possible its rapid and spectacular extension of range and its recent establishment as one of our most abundant urban insects.

It was first noted in London at South Kensington by R. J. Heckford on the 23rd of October, 1981. Since then I have found it, always in abundance, in Chelsea and Lampton, and on Hampstead Heath and Wanstead Flats, the only places in Greater London where I have looked for it. Outside London it has been found on common lime in Winchester and Oxford (P. H. Sterling, pers. comm.). Goater included it only as a doubtful species in his Hampshire list and Waters does not mention it at all in his list for the Oxford district.

Formerly it was strictly univoltine in Britain: woodland larvae collected in July never produced adults until the next year. However, the race on common lime is bivoltine (at any rate it was so in 1983). The reason may be climatic since it is bivoltine on the Continent and the British second generation may occur only in the "new" south-eastern colonies. But it is also possible that in the greatly increased population a proportion of early emergences occur, creating a capacity for a second brood.

I should be very pleased to hear of new facts, records or theories. There is some urgency if they are to be included in *The moths and butterflies of Great Britain and Ireland* Volume 2, which we are hoping to publish in the summer of 1984. A. M. EMMET, Labrey Cottage, Victoria Gardens, Saffron Walden, Essex, CB11 3AF.

FRESH MOUNTAIN AIR. . . . ? – On the 18th of May 1983, whilst collecting on the western slopes of Mount Kenya, I observed two incidents of unusual(?) sexual behaviour in butterflies which prompt putting pen to paper.

It was a miserable day, the upper slopes of the mountain were hidden by cloud from about 9 o'clock and by 11 o'clock the rot had set in, the drizzle was almost constant and few butterflies were flying half heartedly during breaks in the weather.

The first incident occurred at about 3,000 metres, close to Percival's Bridge on the Naro Moru trail, built by the Royal Engineers in 1961. I was watching a female (?) specimen of the small *Actizera stellata* Trimen (Lep.; Lycaenidae) feeding on the pale pink blooms of *Erlangea fusca* (Compositae) when a fresh male *Harpencyreus aequatorialis* Sharpe (Lep.; Lycaenidae) alighted on the flower head and, without any preamble, proceeded to pursue the *stellata* around the flower head in a most urgent and positive manner.

This 'Sexual harrassment' lasted about half a minute during which time *aequatorialis* frantically endeavoured to make contact with the tip of the *stellata* abdomen. *Stellata* seemed mildly irritated throughout and eventually flew off. It was not pursued. It is of interest that *aequatorialis* was by far the commoner of the two species at that time; no females were seen.

About mid day, some 500 metres lower down the mountain I was searching for the female of *Colias electo pseudohecate* (Lep: Pieridae) among some short wet grass on a steep slope by the roadside. Males were plentiful and most were fresh but females appeared to be just emerging. As luck would have it, I spotted my first female *electo* when I already had an *Appias* sp. in the net. Having captured the *electo* I despatched both and took them from the net, holding them on my open palm prior to boxing. A worn male *electo* which had been fluttering weakly close to the net (but not around the female prior to capture), then approached the female of his species and, unconcerned that she was now dead, tried to mate with her. I brushed the male gently aside and boxed the female; however, he was not to be discouraged and now redoubled his efforts to mate, this time with the dead female *Appias* resting on my palm. Obtaining no response he gripped her thorax and wing base area and almost succeeded in lifting her off my hand; if he had been in better condition he would perhaps have been successful. It was some moments before he gave up and flew off.

Are these events unusual? I have occasionally seen a butterfly pursue or make advances to an individual of a different (but similar) species, breaking off when the error is realised. I have never witnessed such prolonged and positive aberrant sexual behaviour before; perhaps there's something about the air on Mount Kenya . . . ?!

My thanks to Ms. Sylvia Gould of the Botany Dept., BM(NH), who kindly identified *E. fusca* from a colour print. — W. J. TENNENT, 1 Middlewood Close, Fylingthorpe, Whitby, N. Yorkshire.

COLEOPHORA OCHREA HAWORTH IN KENT. — On 14.viii.1982 I netted a largish *Coleophora* flying in the early evening over open downland near Gillingham; it was very worn but slight traces of silver were still visible and I was confident that it was *Coleophora ochrea*. I revisited the site on 4.vi.1983 to search for the larval cases on *Helianthemum* and upon the first patch of foodplant that I could find, after a few minutes I spotted a leaf that had been eaten by a coleophorid larva and closer inspection revealed two half-grown cases attached to a grass stem. A very careful 'hands-and-knees' search produced a further two cases within about fifteen minutes, one feeding on the upperside of a leaf, the other feeding on the underside. These four were all I was to find despite a concentrated search of about four hours.

I returned on the evening of 10.vi.1983 and was rewarded by finding nine cases in about 1½ hours, most of which were in their final stages of case development. The leaves upon which they were